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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

17 September 1964

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 42-64: (Internal ONE Working Paper --
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SUBJECT: Cyprus: The Next Phase

SUMMARY

The failure of the Geneva talks has ushered in a lull in the Cyprus dispute that may last for some time. Though the Turks seem determined not to accept a further deterioration of their position on the island and, indeed, are threatening to adopt a somewhat more forceful policy, they are not eager to provoke hostilities. Greek Cypriot President Makarios, who appears to want to strengthen his hand in the UN, has reacted by lifting the economic blockade he had imposed and by announcing an amnesty for Turkish Cypriots. Athens continues to desire a settlement, but has not yet shown inclination to accept the risks involved in bringing Makarios into line. None of the parties to the dispute is yet ready to compromise, and thus further mediation efforts by either the UN or NATO seem unlikely to lead to meaningful Greek-Turkish negotiations in the near future.

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1. In recent weeks there has been something of a lull in the Cyprus crisis while all parties to the dispute have been considering their next moves. Greek Cypriot forces, which seem

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under increasingly strong control of their leaders, have avoided provoking new clashes, although there has been no general easing of their pressure on the Turkish community. Greek Cypriot President Makarios has taken this opportunity to attempt to arrange additional international support with visits to the UAR and continued negotiations with the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, tension of the island continues high and there are clearly dangers in the near future, especially as the Turks seem to be adopting a stronger and more independent attitude.

2. The failure of the Geneva talks to achieve a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus dispute has heightened the Turkish sense of diplomatic isolation. US pressure on Turkey to desist in military action against Greek Cypriot President Makarios, despite the latter's intransigence and aggressiveness toward the Turkish Cypriots, has also added to this feeling of isolation. By now, Turkey has almost certainly lost much of its original hope that the US would by some miracle move to produce a tolerable Cyprus settlement -- i.e. one giving Turkey sovereignty over at least a small part of Cyprus. Thus the Turks have emerged from events of past weeks with a belief that only through their own actions will a satisfactory settlement of the Cyprus issue be reached.

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3. In this situation, the parliamentary weakness of Inonu's government and the strength of opposition attacks on its Cyprus policy have stiffened the determination of the government to adopt a more forceful posture toward Cyprus. Inonu, therefore, answered his parliamentary critics by taking a belligerent tone against both Makarios and Greece, whom he held equally responsible for the continued deterioration of the Turkish Cypriot position on the island. He promised stiff resistance to any further encroachments against the Turkish Cypriots and threatened that war, if it came, would not be confined to Cyprus but would spill over onto the Greek mainland. The Turkish government has also retreated somewhat from the concessions it was willing to consider at Geneva. Though these declarations were undoubtedly made primarily for home consumption and Inonu and Turkey's top military leaders will not lightly resort to military action, we think they do reflect a Turkish decision to adopt a more forceful policy toward Cyprus.

4. The Turkish government has apparently decided to take the initiative in proving to Makarios that they will not permit any further deterioration of the Turkish Cypriot position, either militarily or economically. In this connection, Inonu has

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announced that relief shipments would be made to beleaguered Turkish Cypriot communities on the island, using force if opposed. The Turkish government has also indicated its intention to accomplish in the near future the long delayed rotation of part of its contingent stationed on the island in accordance with the London-Zurich agreement.

5. While these Turkish moves entail some risks, we do not believe that the Turks are actively seeking an excuse to intervene militarily on Cyprus. On the contrary, they probably believe their show of determination will convince Makarios to give way. Moreover, these are issues on which they seem to feel that Turkey has considerable international support and on which Makarios will not want to force a showdown. Although Makarios is capable of pursuing a policy of extremely high risk, we also believe that he will back down on these issues, because it does not seem in his interest to have a confrontation at this time.

6. In fact, Makarios has already reacted by lifting the economic blockade which he had imposed in an effort to crush Turkish Cypriot resistance. In an attempt to appear particularly magnanimous, Makarios has also announced an amnesty for Turkish Cypriots. These moves, which were probably taken to improve his

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UN position as well as to avoid conflict with the Turks, have already borne fruit. As a result the harsh report of the UN Secretary General has been amended to reflect the lessening of tension. Moreover, Makarios has been able to exploit the reaction of the Turkish community which understandably refuses to credit Makarios' sincerity.

7. Athens is thus now faced with a difficult dilemma. The Papandreou government continues to desire a settlement of the Cyprus controversy. Makarios' efforts to sabotage the Geneva talks and his determination to develop more intimate relationships with the USSR have already brought him into conflict with the Papandreou government. But though the some 10,000 regular Greek army troops on the island are an important asset for Papandreou, it is difficult for him to use them to oppose Makarios for refusing to make concessions to Turkey. Thus Papandreou has not yet been willing to risk making an all out attempt either to keep Makarios in line or to eliminate him from the scene. And with Greek public opinion in its aroused state, it will probably be even more difficult for Papandreou to force a showdown with Makarios.

8. Little can be expected from the UN, which is scheduled to consider various aspects of the Cyprus crisis in the near future.

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The mandate for the UN peace keeping force on Cyprus is due to expire on 26 September. This will probably be renewed for another three months, as all parties have indicated their approval, though some attempt may be made to exclude British troops from the force. In view of the prospective Turkish moves, Makarios probably will attempt to secure a resolution branding Turkey as an aggressor. As long as violence on the island does not erupt, however, these UN sessions are not likely to produce any fundamental change and the UN Security Council, which has recently considered appeals by Greece and Turkey, is likely to do little more than reaffirm its previous appeals for moderation. Moreover, it will be sometime before a new UN mediator can be appointed and make any effective contribution toward a solution.

9. With the danger of war thus remaining uncomfortably close, both Greece and Turkey have shown some interest in NATO Secretary General Brosio's efforts to expand his "watching brief" into an instrument for mediation. Yet prospects that this would lead to meaningful negotiations between Greece and Turkey over the next few months are dim. Public opinion in both countries is inflamed, pressing the governments not to compromise. Moreover, the continuing expulsion of Greek citizens from Istanbul only increases pressure on Papandreu not to consider concessions.

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Finally, negotiations cannot proceed very far unless Athens either establishes firm control over the Greek Cypriots or successfully eliminates Makarios from the scene. Neither of these courses seems likely in the near future.

10. In short, while the situation is brittle and fighting could be precipitated by hot heads on either side at any time, we feel that for the next few months the odds favor continuation of something like the present stalemate with tension on a plateau. Both sides are likely to take only the minimum steps necessary to avoid a shooting war and though some clashes may occur we feel that these are not likely to escalate into major conflict. But we do not believe that the tougher Turkish policy short of war will be a sufficient spur to reach a negotiated settlement.

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